ADDITIONAL SETTLEMENTS REACHED IN LCD PRICE-FIXING LITIGATION

LITTLE ROCK - Attorney General Dustin McDaniel announced today that agreements have been reached with three manufacturers of flat-panel liquid crystal display screens to settle allegations that the companies' executives conspired to fix the prices of LCD screens in consumers' televisions, computer monitors and other electronic devices.

AU Optronics Corp., LG Display Co., Ltd., and Toshiba Corp., agreed to pay a total of $571 million to resolve claims brought in a federal lawsuit filed by McDaniel and seven other attorneys general in August 2010.

In December 2011, McDaniel announced settlements with the majority of defendants in the lawsuit. Today's agreements resolve the remainder of the claims. As a result of the settlements, at least $692 million in restitution will be available to eligible consumers, businesses and government entities in 25 states, including Arkansas.

"Consumers who purchased products made by these manufacturers were forced to pay for the actions these companies engaged in when they colluded to raise prices in violation of antitrust law," McDaniel said. "We pursued this litigation so that Arkansas consumers would not have to bear the costs of the illegally inflated prices set by these companies."

The settling companies also have resolved claims brought by McDaniel for civil penalties under the Arkansas Unfair Practices Act. In total, Arkansas will receive $1.189 million in civil penalties from the LCD settlements. That money will be directed to the State Treasury.

McDaniel's 2010 lawsuit alleged that top executives of several companies held numerous secret meetings from at least 1999 to at least 2006 for the purpose of exchanging information and setting prices on LCD panels. Targets of the price-fixing scheme included companies such as Apple, Dell and Hewlett Packard.

Consumers who purchased products with LCD panels manufactured by the settling companies from Jan. 1, 1999, to Dec. 31, 2006, may be eligible for restitution. Claim amounts have not yet been determined. Consumers may register at www.lcdfinal.com to be notified when claim forms are available, or they may call toll-free at (855) 225-1886.

Settling companies have included: AU Optronics, LG Display Co., Toshiba Corp., and those companies' affiliated entities, as well as: Chimei Innolux Corp.; Chi Mei Optoelectronics USA, Inc.; Chi Mei Optoelectronics Japan Co., Ltd.; HannStar Display Corporation; Hitachi, Ltd.; Hitachi Displays, Ltd.; Hitachi Electronic Devices, USA, Inc.; Samsung Electronics, Co., Ltd.; Samsung Electronics America, Inc.; Samsung Semiconductor, Inc.; Sharp Corporation; and Sharp Electronics Corporation.

The settling companies denied any wrongdoing.

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